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H I N T S

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FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF

P A T I E N T S

IN

H O S P I T A L S.

K
BY THOMAS SCOTT,

CHAPLAIN OF THE LOCK HOSPITAL.

L O N D O N :

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S T M I H

TO BE TAKEN FROM THE



S T M I H

THESE hints were printed A.D. 1788 without a name, or without being regularly published, in order to be distributed by a benevolent person among the patients, in several hospitals, to which he was a liberal benefactor: and they are now published with some alterations and additions, in hopes that others of the same character, may think them suited to similar designs, and promote their circulation in some of our numerous hospitals and infirmaries. With very few and obvious variations, it is presumed that they may equally apply to the case of patients attending dispensaries; or sick persons of every description, especially such as are receiving any kind of charitable assistance.

STOMACH

OF THE

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FOR DOCTORS

AND PATIENTS

BY

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H I N T S,

&c.

THE word of God commands us, “in the day of adversity to *consider*!” This is with you, my friends, a day of adversity; and I shall be happy, if you will permit me to assist you in such *consideration*, as is more immediately seasonable, and profitable in *your present* situation. You cannot but observe the eagerness with which the diseased apply for relief from their bodily complaints!—Though the condition of patients in hospitals, or indeed of the sick when under cure in other places, cannot be rendered agreeable; and though the means of recovery are often very irksome and painful: yet the dread of death, and the desire of health, render men earnest to put themselves under the care of physicians, or to procure letters of admission into hospitals; and willing to submit to those methods of cure which are deemed necessary. But after all, how uncertain and transient is the expected relief! How vain and troublesome the life thus prolonged! How soon must we all yield to the stroke of death!—The continuance of our lives is sure to be the lengthening of our temporal sufferings; and too often men so employ returning health, that they only by

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means

¹ Eccles. vii. 14. See Job v. 6—8.

means of it “treasure up for themselves wrath
“against the day of wrath.”

But an eternal state awaits us! A future judgment, and its dreadful or delightful consequences! And who is there that has not committed many sins, or does not feel a proneness to evil, and backwardness to good?—Yet with what indifference do men receive the instructions of heavenly wisdom! How little pains are they willing to bestow, to learn or walk in the way which leads to everlasting life! Nay, how negligent to flee from the wrath to come, and to seek deliverance from endless misery!

The aim and intention of physicians, surgeons, and other medical assistants are readily understood: and they who refuse to comply with their directions, however painful and self-denying, are deemed obstinate enemies to themselves; but the design of those who, by counsel or books, would promote their eternal good, is scarcely perceived: their labour of love is thought needless, if not impertinent! Too often men turn away with disgust or resentment; and seldom will they give themselves much trouble, or bestow a tolerable measure of pains, about those infinitely important concerns! “But beloved, I hope better things of you;” and must beg you to consider, that I am as certainly using the proper means, which, by God’s blessing, may be effectual for your eternal salvation; as your kind and humane physicians are using the proper means of restoring your health, and prolonging

longing your lives. Let me then propose to your most serious attention the following short Hints on a subject of infinite importance.

I. You should consider that affliction is not a thing which comes of course, or by chance; but springs from the holy and righteous abhorrence, with which God beholds iniquity; and is under his immediate direction and appointment.

When God had created man *in his own image*, and pronounced him very good, in addition to the law written in his heart, he laid on him one single restraint, amidst those blessings with which he was surrounded; adding this threatening; “In the day, that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.” When, through Satan’s temptation he had eaten the forbidden fruit, the sentence in part was pronounced in these words, “dust thou art, and “to dust shalt thou return.” The consequence evidently proves our concern in this transaction. “By one man sin entered into the “world, and death by sin, and so death passed “upon all men, in that all have sinned.” At that awful season man became a distempered, dying creature: his sentence is executed in a gradual manner; and every pain and disease you or I feel forms a part of that execution, is the beginning of death, and the forerunner of the last fatal stroke. We should therefore under afflictions, consider, submit to, and adore the justice of God in them; reflect upon his holy hatred of sin therein displayed, and endeavour

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¹ Read Gen, iii. and Rom. v.

deavour to affect our hearts with a sense of its malignity, that we may deeply repent, and abhor our own iniquities. And as in Christ the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, we are dealt with as under a dispensation of mercy ; we ought also to consider the *goodness* of God in our sufferings ; his patience in bearing so long with us ; his kindness in warning us by such merciful chastisements, instead of cutting us off in our sins ; and his tenderness in chastising so gently, in comparison of our deservings, and the sufferings many others endure.

II. You should from your present affliction take occasion to consider, that if these first fruits of sin are so bitter, what will be the misery in another world of those who die in their sins ? The pains you feel, the death you fear, and the scenes of misery and mortality around you, loudly proclaim the displeasure of God : but the body, the seat of sickness and the prey of death, is merely the instrument of unrighteousness ; the soul is the contriver and the agent in sin. The curse upon the serpent, by which satan tempted our first parents, was only the outward token of God's vengeance upon satan himself : nor is the pain and death of the body more than a visible token of the invisible effects of " God's wrath against every soul of " man that doeth evil." " It is appointed " for all men once to die, and *after death* the " judgment." It is the wrath *to come*, which we are warned to flee from, and from which Jesus delivers us¹ : we are bid " not to fear " them who kill the body, and after that
" have

¹ Read Rom. vi. 1 Thess. i.

“ have no more that they can do ; but to fear
 “ him, who is able to destroy both body and
 “ soul in hell.” Oh then, under the pains you
 feel, consider, that if these light afflictions, and
 but for a moment, seem so burdensome and
 tedious, how could you endure everlasting pun-
 ishment, where “ the fire is not quenched,
 “ and the worm dieth not ?”

III. This will induce you to consider, whe-
 ther you are prepared to meet your God in
 judgment, should this sickness end in your
 death. Life, at the best, is short and uncertain ;
 and notwithstanding the favourable judgment
 of the most skilful physicians, and the use of
 the most excellent medicines, you may possi-
 bly be taken away : nor will you be the less
 likely to recover for making the enquiry, Am
 I ready for death and judgment ? Am I en-
 titled to, and fit for the kingdom of heaven ?
 Oh, do not put the issue of that awful decision,
 on which the happiness or misery of eternity
 depends, upon a comparative freedom from
 gross wickedness. You may, or you may not,
 have been moral and decent in your outward
 deportment : but surely you have not feared,
 loved, served, and worshipped God in all his
 ordinances and commandments, so much, and
 so well as you ought to have done, as his pre-
 cepts and your relations and obligations to him
 require : you have frequently no doubt in-
 dulged evil thoughts, harboured sinful desires
 and covetings, spoken idle and evil words,
 committed many secret sins, loved worldly
 objects inordinately, pursued them immode-
 rately ;

rately; and either neglected religious duties, or performed them in a very careless and heartless manner. You have either been much better than the best of mere men mentioned in scripture; or else you have been very inattentive to God's law and your own thoughts, words, and works, if you be not sensible that this is true respecting you; for they all confessed that they were thus guilty¹. And all this being *sin*, must either be pardoned, or punished; it is transgression of the law; and it is written, "Curfed is every one, who continueth not in
"all things written in the book of the law to
"do them."

And do not imagine that some transient sorrow, partial amendment, external performances, or imperfect obedience in future, can so make amends for former crimes, or so merit God's favour, as to deliver you from future punishment, and entitle you to eternal life. This notion, however common, is totally unreasonable: no man expects to escape the punishment of robbery or murder, as the reward of not committing more robberies or murders; or pretends to pay old debts by going with ready money for what he *now* buys. Nay indeed, if righteousness come by the law, and by any of our imperfect obedience to it for a part of our lives, then verily Christ died in vain. And if *your* sufferings in this world could atone for your sins, *his* sufferings would have been needless, and the denunciation of
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¹ Read Job xl. 3—5. Job. xlii. 1—6. Psalms xxxii, xxxviii, xl. Isaiah vi. Nehemiah ix. Daniel ix.

the wrath to come, mere words without a meaning¹.

No, my brethren, these indeed are mere human devices, which will be found as ineffectual at the day of judgment; as every other expedient for safety proved in Noah's deluge, to those who refused to enter the Ark.

God hath himself contrived, effected, and revealed in his holy word, salvation for sinners; springing from his compassionate love, and accomplished in a way, which is suited to impress the mind with a deep sense of the evil of sin, the desert, misery, and danger of sinners, the excellency of his law, the holiness of his nature, and the awful justice of his government; as well as to shew the riches of his mercy, and to prove the insufficiency of all other methods of salvation: at the same time, the greatest encouragement is given to the humble penitent, and the most effectual motives furnished to all holy chearful obedience for the future.—“Other foundation can no
“man lay but Christ Jesus,” the eternal Son of God in our nature, our Surety, High-priest, sacrifice, and Intercessor: in his person, God manifest in the flesh, all salvation is treasured up, purchased by his meritorious life, and agonizing death, dispensed through his intercession, and by the supply of his Spirit to sanctify our souls. The sinner who is convinced of his danger, humbly conscious of his guilt, sensible of the worth of his immortal soul, and drawn off from all other dependences, in the exercise
of

¹ Read Rom. iii. and iv. Gal. ii. and iii.

of genuine repentance, and believing the testimony of God's word, that Jesus is able and willing to save to the uttermost ; encouraged by his invitations and promises, with earnest desires, trembling expectations, and fervent prayers, comes, applies and waits upon him for this salvation ; waits also his time, and never waits in vain¹. He is now become willing to renounce his sins, deny himself, and undervalue other interests and pleasures, when they come in competition with the salvation of his soul, and the excellency of Christ². In this way he passes from death unto life, obtains pardon of sin, peace of conscience, the gracious influences of the holy Spirit, becomes a new creature, walks in newness of life ; ceases to do evil, learns to do well ; and by the grace of God, (which he earnestly seeks in daily prayer) is taught, inclined, and enabled "to deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world."

This man is indeed a Christian, has a hope of glory which maketh not ashamed, and is therefore fit for death and judgment ; because he is entitled to, and meet for, the inheritance of the saints in light. But, deceive not yourselves—*this man alone is fit to die* ; for without repentance of sin, faith in Christ, love to him, and holiness of heart and life, through the sanctification of the Spirit, no man can find acceptance with God, or admission into heaven.

¹ Read Matt. xi. 29—31. Matt. xxii. 2 Cor. v. and vi.

² Read Phil. iii.

ven. Consider therefore in this time of adversity, whether you have built on this rock, fled to this refuge, come to God in this way, and experienced this change of disposition and behaviour. If this be indeed your happy case, your *consideration* will issue in inward peace and joy, and gratitude to God even for his fatherly correction¹; and submission to his will, whether for life or death: and you will endeavour to convince your fellow sufferers, that religion is the source of the most effectual consolations, the cure of impatience, and remedy against the fear of death.

If this matter be yet doubtful, you will see the necessity of improving your confinement and retirement, the continuance of your life, and the use of your reason, of which you may so soon be deprived, in serious self-examination, searching the scriptures, humble and particular confession of the sins of your past life; and fervent constant prayers to God to teach you his truth, shew you his salvation, give you repentance and his holy Spirit, for Christ's sake forgive your sins, give you the comfort of his pardoning love, and by renewing you to holiness, to prepare you for a holy heaven whenever you leave this world. In short, you will see cause, without delay, "to seek the Lord, " whilst he may be found²," in all the means of grace, as far as your disorders will admit of it. For, if, flattering yourself with hopes of recovery, and future years of life, you should postpone this one thing needful, and your
sickness

¹ Read Heb. xii.

² Read Isaiah lv.

sickness should end in death, (which, considering that you live and move and have your being in that God with whom you thus trifle, may probably be the case,) the event and disappointment will be indeed tremendous¹. But whether life or death be before you, the counsel here given must be good; and the calm arising from such serious attention to the concerns of eternity, would best concur with the medicines in restoring your health.

IV. You should next *consider* what is the best method of bearing your affliction. It must be borne, and cannot be avoided: but the question recurs, How may the burden be best supported, and rendered lightest? Surely impatience, fretfulness and peevishness not only provoke the indignation of God, but increase the weight of your sufferings, and render all around you weary of assisting you. On the other hand humble submission, patience, and quietness of spirit break the force, and lessen the weight of afflictions; and render every person chearful, and ready to afford you the help which you are capable of receiving. And “why should a *living man* complain, a “man for the punishment of his sins²?” Is it not “better to be chastened of the Lord, than “to be condemned with the world?” We are punished much less than our iniquities deserve: and ’tis our own fault and folly, if all our sufferings are not blessings to us; as they are the appointment of infinite wisdom and love, and have a direct tendency to our good,
if

¹ Read Heb. iii. ² Read Lam. iii. 22—41.

if our obstinacy and depravity do not render them ineffectual.

V. This introduces another subject of consideration; namely, how you may extract benefit from your afflictions, should it please God to restore your health? ‘Have ye suffered so many things in vain?’ He who derives no benefit by afflictions must be a great loser; for he adds ingratitude for recent favours to former provocations; and, if not given up to final impenitency, still sharper corrections will be requisite to bring him to himself¹, seeing milder measures have been ineffectual. The sinner, who is not humbled, and brought to repentance and newness of life, by affliction, has evidently suffered in vain, and has cause to suspect that his recovery will not prove a blessing to him. But he, who like Manasseh², under his affliction, seeks the Lord, and humbles himself greatly before him, with penitent confessions and fervent supplications; who, with true repentance, and faith in Christ, seeks and obtains the pardoning mercy of God, and the grace of his holy Spirit, by which he may be enabled henceforth to lead a new life; will have cause to be thankful, both for sickness and for recovery, and may say, “Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I have kept thy word;” “It is good for me that I have been afflicted.”

VI. You should consider the *goodness of God* to you, in the care taken of you by this
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charity.

¹ Read Luke. xv.

² See 2 Chron. xxxiii.

charity. You ought to be thankful to those, who are God's instruments in your relief, and pray that every blessing may attend them: but the Lord himself creates the medicines, and gives skill to the physicians, and ability and inclination to your generous benefactors. Through his goodness you have all that can alleviate your distress, or tend to remove your disorder, without any trouble or expence to yourselves: this is great cause for gratitude: and on him you must still depend for your cure, and give him thanks for it.

VII. Having through your sickness and confinement, (as far as you are not totally disabled by *your* disorder,) much leisure from worldly business and company; and therefore much opportunity for getting acquaintance with the scriptures, and your own state and character; and being favoured with the means of grace in the scriptures read among you, the exhortations given you, the prayers offered up for you and with you, and the administration of sacred ordinances by your chaplain: you should consider seriously how you may obtain real advantage from these things; which you cannot do, unless you diligently apply your mind to them, and use them heartily, as in the presence of God, and with a desire and expectation of his gracious assistance and blessing.

Especially, Should you be disposed to approach the Lord's table; remember that the bread and wine are only 'the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace.'

‘ grace ¹.’ That not the outward sign, but this inward and spiritual grace, (even the body of Christ, which was broken, and his blood which was shed upon the cross, as the atonement of our sins, and ‘ which are verily and indeed received by the true believer in the Lord’s supper,’) bring salvation to the soul: and that you must ‘ feed upon *him in your hearts*, by faith with thanksgiving ².’ Receiving the sacrament implies a humble confession of guilt, in that we come to the table ‘ not trusting in our own righteousness, but in God’s manifold and great ‘ mercies;’ an entire reliance on the atoning sacrifice of the death of Christ, through faith in his blood, for forgiveness of sins and acceptance with God, as the only way in which he is merciful to sinners; a cordial receiving of him as our Lord and Saviour; an avowed confession of our faith in him, and obligations to him; a thankful remembrance of his sufferings as the ransom of our souls, and the purchase of our salvation; and a solemn dedication of ourselves, as bought with his blood, to serve him in body and soul, and live to his glory in all righteousness and true holiness all the days of our future life.

You must therefore consider that you come to the Lord’s table, not to *merit* of God, but to receive the pledge of unmerited blessings: not to *atone for your own sins*; but to receive the benefit of the atonement, which the Son

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of

¹ See the Church Catechism.

² Read very carefully the whole Communion Service.

of God made in our nature on the cross ; to express your unworthiness of, and thankfulness for, this inestimable gift ; and to seek grace from him, that you may lead the rest of your life, as one who is partaker of this great salvation.

If therefore you are living in known sin, or neglect of known duty ; if you are proudly trusting in your own goodness, establishing your own righteousness, and not thankfully relying on the atonement of Christ ; if you are not desirous of living a new life : in short, if you do not come in deep humiliation, and repentance of sin, express dependence on Christ, with many previous prayers, and serious purposes through his grace of living a life of faith and holiness ; and if you come not forgiving all others from your heart, as you hope for forgiveness from God ; your service will be mere formality, and you will receive unworthily. But coming in the exercise of repentance, faith, love and gratitude, seeking forgiveness for yourselves, forgiving others, and earnestly desiring and praying to lead a new life, you will be an acceptable communicant ; and may humbly expect, that your ‘ soul shall be
‘ strengthened and refreshed by the body and
‘ blood of Christ, as your body is by the bread
‘ and wine ’.

VIII. You should consider how you can render yourselves useful to others in the hospital. How you can promote peace and regularity in your ward, repress immorality or
improper

improper conduct; alleviate the sufferings of any of the patients; be assistant to the nurses; speak any thing for the warning, instruction, or encouragement of others; read the scriptures or good books to such as are willing to hear, but incapable of reading; pray for them or with them; or do any thing, which can in any respect be beneficial. This is evidently your bounden duty; and the least return you can make for the kindness shewn to you.

IX. Should you perceive that your dissolution approaches, consider how you may most properly meet that solemn event. Settle all your other concerns as speedily as possible, that nothing may distract your mind in the hour of death; and remember that sacraments and other religious duties are but *means of grace*: but that renewed repentance of sin, and cordial acceptance of Christ, and committing your soul into his almighty hand, to be washed by his blood, and sanctified by his grace, and received into his presence, is the only effectual preparation. To this, if your strength and senses permit, add serious warnings and exhortations to all around you, to be ready also, for they know not when their time shall come.

X. Finally, If you find your health restored, and your release from confinement approaching; consider that you are returning to the converse and business of a world full of snares and temptations; and with serious apprehensions of the consequences, by earnest

prayers commit yourself to the keeping of divine grace, that the world, the flesh and the devil may not prevail against you : leave the hospital or your sick room “ with fear “ and trembling,” lest you should break the vows of God which are upon you, and return again to sinful practices. Not only return thanks to your kind benefactors, or formally in some place of worship ; but let it be your first business in secrecy and seriousness ; and also in your family if you have one, to render thanks to God for his mercies, to beg his grace to enable you to make suitable returns, and to supplicate his blessing upon the instruments of his goodness. Like Hezekiah after his sickness, and the man whom Christ healed and afterwards found in the temple ¹ let the house of God be the first place you go to. Make a daily practice of reading the scriptures seriously and attentively : begin and end each day with fervent prayer ; avoid ungodly company, as you would persons infected with the plague ; dread, and pray against temptations to sin ; be sure to hallow the whole Lord’s day, and attend on every means of grace : that you may “ sin no more, lest a worse “ thing come unto you.” And may the Lord make these few plain pages the means of your everlasting salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

¹ Read John v.

Published by the same Author.

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